



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781-316-3000

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

Redevelopment Board Minutes 07/26/2010

Minutes of Monday, July 26, 2010
 Approved August 23, 2010
 Arlington Redevelopment Board
 Second Floor Conference Room, Town Hall Annex

Members Present:
 Roland Chaput
 Bruce Fitzsimmons
 Chris Loreti, Chairman
 Ed Tsai
 Andrew West

Several members of the public were also present.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.
 Ms. Kowalski gave a report on Symmes. A conference call with PNC Bank Vice President Liz Paulsen would be arranged by Ms. Kowalski.

The Chairman took approval of the minutes out of order to wait for an individual who would address the Board for the next agenda item. Mr. Fitzsimmons moved to approve the June 28, 2010 minutes as amended. Mr. Chaput seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

The Board then turned to the subject of the Atwood House on the Noyes property leased by CVS. Richard Duffy, co-chair of the Arlington Historical Commission expressed concern about the deterioration of the Atwood House since the Special Permit was issued. A condition of the CVS Special Permit is the preservation and re-use of the Atwood House on-site, effectively a permanent demolition delay. Mr. Duffy averred. The Board concurred. John Worden also addressed the Board on the subject, and presented a letter he had submitted to the Board which the Board had not yet seen. Mr. Worden presented photos showing that the historically significant house was left open to the elements and to unauthorized entry, and that the gate was not secured. After discussion, the Board expressed appreciation that the matter was brought to its attention, and directed Ms. Kowalski to get an official response in writing from the developer on what steps are being taken to preserve and re-use the Atwood House.

The Board then turned to the Environment Design Review Special Permit hearing for 30-50 Mill Street. Mr. Loreti asked for an update on the status of the Zoning Board of Appeals Decision. He stated that he wants the Town Engineer's comments incorporated. Attorney Mary Winstanley O'Connor and her client, Rick Dickason of WP East gave an update. Mr. Loreti said that the Board needed to see the Zoning Board of Appeals Decision as part of the Environmental Design Review process. He added that October 18 would be the 90-day action date on the EDR Special Permit. Mr. Loreti noted that traffic would not be discussed since the ZBA Decision is expected to address entrance and exits to the site.

Ms. Winstanley O'Connor introduced the WP East Team, including Adelaide Grady of WP East, Brian O'Connor and Christopher Polls from Cube 3 architects, and Tim William from Allen & Major Civil Engineers. The Conservation Commission has also reviewed but must leave the Order of Conditions until other Boards have acted. Ms. O'Connor stated. Mr. Dickason gave a comprehensive slide presentation over-view of the proposed development. Afterwards, Mr. O'Connor gave an over-view of the site circulation, safety, mixed-use element, architectures and ecological restoration. He also described the bus and pedestrian connections and bikepath link, and general signage scheme. Mr. O'Connor observed that the 30-unit per acre density is less than the Legacy and the multi-family building Mill Street. He presented a site section, a shadow study, and then turned the presentation over to Mr. Williams, who gave an overview of the site engineering, drainage, parking and utilities. Ms. O'Connor added that 18 units of affordable housing would be provided by the development.

Mr. Fitzsimmons asked for confirmation whether the ZBA decision called for exit-only between Shattuck's and 22 Mill Street. Ms. O'Connor said that it is a requirement. Mr. West asked how the public would access the bikepath. Mr. O'Connor indicated on the plan how the public would use the site to access the bikepath from the Mill Brook footbridge.

Mr. Loreti asked to enter into the hearing record a July 22, 2010 letter to the Director of Planning from Ann LeRoy regarding the Mill Brook, a May 18, 2010 letter from Jeff Maxtutis to the ARB, two letter from the Town Engineer to the applicant, the report from the staff Development Review Meeting, and a March, 2010 memo to the Director of Planning from the Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Mr. Loreti then described the process for public comment on the presentation. He asked that Ms. Winstanley O'Connor and Mr. Dickason hold their responses to public comments until asked by the Board to respond.

Charlie Hays, 31 Johnson Road expressed concern with the density and the traffic when school is in session. He said that from 7:00am to 9:00am cars back up to the Dunkin Donuts on Summer Street creating a bottleneck. From Johnson Road to Edgell Road to Summer Street, it is impossible to turn left. Mr. Hays said that his second point was that the alleyway between 22 Mill Street and Shattuck's Hardware is too narrow to offload trucks and allow cars to pass for egress.

Jim Blakely, Mt. Auburn Hospital and 22 Mill Condominium commented on the difficulty in parking, and asked the Board not to approve anything that would worsen parking.

Dr. Bill Flynn, owner of a Mill Street office condominium wished to emphasize Mr. Blakely's concern. He added that he hoped the applicant can get all the parking they want so the Mill Street office condominiums could enter an agreement for shared parking. Mr. Loreti asked how many parking space Brigham's had previously.

Susan Mills, replied that Brigham's had had 35 spaces

Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick, unit owner, owner of a dental practice at 22 Mill Street, and former condominium association president expressed concern about the egress-only plan. The bridge over the Mill Brook is rated at between 6 and 8 tons. Such a large complex would increase traffic over the bridge, he observed. He expressed concern for the integrity of the bridge long, noting that 22 Mill Street owns that bridge. He expressed concern that during the 7am to 9am peak morning rush hour period, the 22 Mill Street parking lot entrance opposite the entrance to the proposed apartment building and bridge the traffic will have nowhere to go once the apartment owner's cars are added to that intersection. Presently, one can't turn left into the visitor parking for 22 Mill Street visitor parking at that time due to the high school traffic, he commented. During the March floods, Mill Street was backed up to Symmes, since Mystic Valley parkway was closed.

BethAnn Friedman, 10 Hazel Terrace, said she was puzzled to see parking at the perimeter of the site. She asked how much parking is interior to the building and what percentage is outside. She also asked how the height variation affects the unit count, and asked the size of the units. Mr. Loreti requested that, since these questions had factual answers, the applicants address them directly. Ms. O'Connor replied that there is presently an easement. The applicant will deed twelve to fifteen spaces outright. The parking would go under the podium, and eleven more spaces are proposed than required by bylaw. Residents will be told ingress-only. She continued to reply saying that with the five stories, there were still 116 units proposed, but some of the planned loft-style units were eliminated. She said that they would have to address the bridge question. Mr. Dickason added that the units would be one and two-bedrooms.

Patricia Worden, 27 Jason Street, observed that the traffic studies should focus on 7:15 to 8:30am student commuters. Students are injured on the way to school. Supermarket traffic is irrelevant, she noted, since it is distributed throughout the day. She said she was surprised there was no insistence on an escrow account for heavy traffic. She said to consider damage potential to the bridge

and culverts from traffic. She asked for an elevation from the high school baseball diamond. She distributed a picture from this angle, saying that from the view from the high school one currently doesn't notice buildings. She said there would be benefits of getting more space for playing fields. She commented on a Symmes connection with the ZBA Chair and a former Planning director.

Describing how he expected future hearings on the application to proceed, Mr. Loreti stated that he will take additional public comment at future meetings, but public comment will follow after the Board interacts with the developer at each future meeting. Mr. Loreti asked the Board to detail the additional information needed, including a revised model. Mr. Loreti provided a prepared, written list of material for the applicant to provide to the Board. Mr. Loreti asked for a zoning analysis. Ms. Kowalski replied that an official zoning analysis must come from the Zoning Enforcement Officer, Michael Byrne. Mr. Chaput also requested a profile showing Arlington High School and Summer Street to include more of the environs to show the proposed structure in context. Mr. West asked the applicants to include the site plan photo-shopped into the locus area with area surroundings. Mr. West cited Item 7 of the Environmental Design Review Regulations, relation to neighborhood. He asked that the applicants take the angle of view as seen in Ms. Worden's photographs from the high school playing fields and show proposed buildings profiles from those angles. Mr. West asked for details about the construction of the model. Mr. Williams replied that it was a chip-board massing model. Mr. West found this acceptable. Mr. Chaput asked that they include Arlington High School and Summer Street in the model.

Ms. Winstanley O'Connor asked if the Board would like the traffic engineer at the next meeting. Mr. Loreti stated that it would be too early. Mr. Chaput asked for a report by the police and fire chiefs that were submitted. Ms. Winstanley O'Connor replied that two letters were submitted, and that she would provide those to Ms. Kowalski. Mr. Loreti asked Mr. West which LEED checklist was appropriate for this development. He also asked for hard copies of the shadow study from the applicant. He asked that the applicant show the useable landscaped area and landscaped area within parking areas. He asked for Gross Floor Area, a circulation plan, more detailed signage plan, more detail on HVAC noise levels, and more information on plans for parking.

Mr. Fitzsimmons asked for information on future shared parking arrangements, whether it was possible to accommodate spillover parking from Arlington High School events, more information on where the development swale area meets the pocket park, to appear like there would be a public access easement safety. Mr. Fitzsimmons also asked to see on the plan how the requirement for 8% of landscaping to be within the parking lot will be met, and more on Transportation Demand Management.

Mr. Tsoi asked for detail of retaining wall to be shown on the model.

Mr. Loreti asked how the stormwater bylaw will be met. Mr. Williams replied that the Town Engineer sent a review memorandum and he will meet with the Town Engineer on the water quality swale. Mr. Loreti asked about outfalls. Mr. Williams replied that stormwater will be treated and sent to the outfall. Ms. Kowalski asked if they were prepared to address the Town Engineer's concern about the high groundwater and the bottom of the water quality swale. Mr. Williams said that they would address it. Mr. West asked how retail parking at Shattucks and the proposed retail was allocated. Mr. Chaput asked to show on the plan how much of the landscaping is native.

The hearing was then continued to August 23, at 7:00pm by written agreement of the Board and the applicant. Mr. Fitzsimmons moved to continue. Mr. Tsoi seconded. All voted in favor 5-0-0. Senior Planner Laura Wiener asked if traffic would be addressed at the next meeting. Mr. Loreti said that he would let the Transportation Advisory Committee know, but thought it was not likely.

Mr. West asked if the Board could receive a hard copy of the applicant's presentation. The applicants agreed. Ms. Kowalski would put the PDF file on an internet site for the Board's access.

The Board then turned to the July 12 minutes. Mr. Fitzsimmons moved to approve as amended. Mr. Chaput seconded. The Board voted to approve the minutes 3-0-2.

In other business, Ms. Kowalski raised the subject of a rent reduction requested by the Recreation Department. The Chairman observed that if the Gibbs School was not under the jurisdiction of the Redevelopment Board building, it was unclear how to proceed. The Board asked Ms. Kowalski to request in writing an opinion from Town Counsel.

The Board then discussed how to re-open the Special Permit for the Mystic Street Gulf Station to implement Officer Rateau's suggestion for signage exiting the gas station, in response to complaints to the Selectmen's office. The question arose of whether there was a written request to address this. Mr. Fitzsimmons would review the procedure and report to the Board. Mr. Loreti asked to check with the Board of Selectmen on getting the Transportation Advisory Committee involved.

Mr. Chaput informed the Board that he had written to the Town Manager declining to seek reappointment, and that his term would end September 14. Mr. Loreti asked Mr. Chaput to stay on through the end of the Brigham permit decision.

Mr. Chaput then moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Fitzsimmons seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:58pm

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kowalski
Secretary ex Officio